

LEARNING TO BE A CMC

SEPTEMBER 2005

AIH HANDS

MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. NAVY

*Today's Sailors
Step Into the Past
on "Old Ironsides"*



14 Sailors step into the past...

If you ever get to Boston, stop by USS *Constitution* and step into the past. Her crew is forever young even though she's 207 years old. She is as stalwart as the day she was launched in 1797. She earned her nickname "Old Ironsides," as enemy cannonballs bounced off her sides, and although her five sister ships are long gone, she remains the oldest commissioned warship on the Navy List.

[On the Front Cover]

SN Angela Nice stands on the deck of USS *Constitution* awaiting the next tour group. With its 207-year history, "Old Ironsides" ranks as one of the top tourist sites in the Boston metropolitan area.

Photo by JO1 Charles L. Ludwig

[Next Month]

Look for the 11th annual "Any Day in the Navy" issue and see what happened in your Navy this year.



Photo by JO1 Charles L. Ludwig

[Number 1061]

ALL HANDS

September

[Features]

[Departments]

Around the Fleet — 8
Focus on Service — 38
The Final Word — 40

22 Building the Triad

When Command Master Chief (SW/AW) Loretta Glenn stepped aboard USS *Gettysburg* (CG 64) for the first time, she had a plan. After completing the Command Master Chief/Chief of the Boat course at the Senior Enlisted Academy, she knew exactly what her goals were, how to accomplish them, and had a huge network of current and former CMCs to help her with any problem she might encounter.

Photo by PH1 (AW) Shane T. McCoy




30 An Elegant Presentation

Since 1974, Navy Enlisted Aides (NEA) have been responsible for the upkeep and organization of the four-story, 32-room Vice President's Residence and pool house. Like an usher preparing an opera theater for the next show, they overlook no detail for both the occupants and their guests. NEAs must have a working knowledge of both formal and informal etiquette practices including table manners, formal service and guest protocol. Elegant presentation of food is at the heart of their duties.

Photo by PH3 Todd Frantom







CAPT Kenneth Norton, commanding officer of
USS *Camden* (AOE 2), addresses his crew during an
all hands call after the promotion of five Sailors.

Photo by PH1 Aaron Ansarov

Speaking with Sailors

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy
MCPON (SS/AW) Terry D. Scott

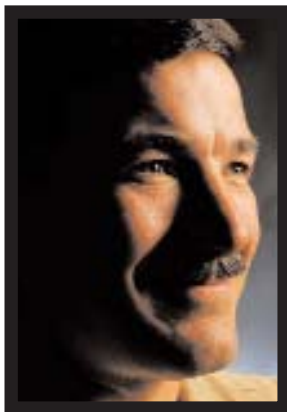
The MCPON discussed the Sea Warrior program with Sailors at a recent All Hands call:

Today, more than ever, the Navy understands the value of our Sailors meeting the mission we face today in the Global War on Terrorism and the unknown challenges of the future. Even with all the advanced technology at our disposal and the resources to take the fight to our enemies, America's competitive edge in ensuring a safer world remains with our people. The creativity, ingenuity and steadfastness to duty of our Sailors never ceases to amaze me.

The Navy is undergoing a cultural change to career development as we work toward our goal to make sure every Sailor is a perfect match for his or her Navy job. The Navy has created a revolutionary, 21st century personnel system — Sea Warrior. Sea Warrior will be an all-inclusive personnel system designed to match your skills with the right job and help mold those skills through interactive career management to make sure you can be a part of the motivated, educated, agile force our nation needs.

This cultural change is exciting. For you to realize your potential and become the Sailor our Navy and nation demands, it is crucial that you are able to monitor your

own career progress and see where you can take action to improve yourself. You will have the ability and the power of choice to take control of your own career. With training, guidance and leadership, you will learn what steps you have to take to get a specific job and have a successful career.



For the two Sea Warrior tools available right now, you can visit Navy Knowledge Online (NKO) for tutorials on the 5-Vector Model (5VM) and the Job Advertising and Selection System (JASS) Career Management System (JCMS). Resources such as these will permit you to maximize your potential and make the right choices for your career goals. In other words, Sea Warrior is a system that helps remove the guesswork involved in planning your career.

Sea Warrior gives you the chance to compete for jobs and career opportunities within the Navy, offering an open system where you can apply for jobs you want, and commands can find the Sailors with the skill sets they need.

As a leader, you will be held directly accountable for the growth of your subordinates as well as your own growth. You will be able, through 5VM and JCMS on NKO to follow your personal roadmap, one that reflects how you handle the opportunities given to the Sailors placed under your supervision and how you help them reach their potential.

With the support of Sea Warrior, the Navy will use its most precious resource — you — to ensure we can meet the challenges of the future. The Navy's sustained investment in the growth and development of every Sailor ultimately means continuing on a journey of lifelong learning. ■

For more information go to www.nko.navy.mil

Speaking with Sailors is a monthly column initiated by the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy as a way of reaching out to the men and women of the fleet, whether they are stationed just down the road or halfway around the world.

All Hands (USPS 372-970; ISSN 0002-5577) Number 1061 is published monthly by the Naval Media Center, Publishing Department, 2713 Mitscher Rd. S.W., Anacostia Annex, D.C. 20373-5819. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional mailing offices. **Subscriptions:** For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 or call 202/512-1800. Subscription prices \$45 (domestic)/\$54 (foreign); \$7.50 (single copy domestic)/\$9 (single copy foreign). **Postmaster:** Send address changes to All Hands, Naval Media Center, Publishing Department 2713 Mitscher Rd., S.W., Anacostia Annex, D.C. 20373-5819. **Editorial Offices:** Send submissions and correspondence to Naval Media Center Publishing Department, ATTN: Editor, 2713 Mitscher Rd., S.W., Anacostia Annex, D.C. 20373-5819. Tel: DSN 288-4171 or 202/433-4171 Fax: DSN 288-4747 or 202/433-4747 E-Mail: allhands@mediacen.navy.mil Message: NAVMEDIACEN WASHINGTON DC //32// **Authorization:** The Secretary of the Navy has determined this publication is necessary in the transaction of business required by law of the Department of the Navy. Funds for printing this publication have been approved by the Navy Publications and Printing Committee. This magazine is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of *All Hands* magazine are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, DOD or the U.S. Navy.

AllHands
Number 1061 • September 2005
www.navy.mil

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LCS Crew to be Hybrid Sailors

Four Naval Personnel Development Command Learning Centers have been working since November to build a training program for the first crew members of the Navy's first Littoral Combat Ship (LCS), *Freedom* (LCS 1), who started arriving for duty in January.

The Center for Surface Combat Systems (CSCS) is the lead Learning Center of Excellence for LCS and is working in conjunction with the Center for Naval Engineering (CNE), Center for Service Support (CSS) and Center for Information Dominance on individual schoolhouse training issues. To identify the skills needed to operate the ship, Human Capital Objects (HCO), a detailed description that identifies all work, including watches and collateral duties.

"LCS is the first ship on which manning and training requirements were determined based on the development of HCOs, leveraging the significant work accomplished in Job/Task Analysis and skills-based assessment," said CSCS Commanding Officer CAPT Rick Easton.

With a total projected crew of 75, the optimally manned *Freedom* requires that its crew members have skills in more than just their rating. They will have a blend of skills from several ratings, which is creating a new, or hybrid, Sailor.

"Today you have a billet on a ship that's ascribed to an engineman 2nd class. That means you have a stovepipe you can only put an enginemen in that billet who does enginemen type work based on occupational standards and things of that nature,"

explained CNE 5-Vector Model Manager Roy Hoyt. "When you want to build a hybrid Sailor, what you're doing now is mixing and matching the flavor of work contained within that billet that becomes your HCO."

As a result, some of the LCS work requirements such as some scheduled maintenance and repairs are being moved ashore.

Regardless of rating, the added skills will be reflected in the Sailor's 5-Vector Model. "Sailors on this Littoral Combat Ship are going to attain various certifications, qualifications, knowledge, skills and abilities that will be resident on their 5-Vector Model, so that in the future when they want to move to another HCO that is created, they can compare their resume against that position and in many cases may fit better than their contemporaries," he said.

"LCS is without doubt an advanced combat platform that provides significantly expanded opportunity in both operational and technical responsibilities outside of traditional Navy Rating boundaries," Easton added. "Part of the Revolution in Training vision is to expand opportunities for Sailors to grow beyond traditional constructs of today's ratings. LCS provides that opportunity unlike any other platform in today's Navy."

To learn more, visit the



Center for Surface Combat Systems and Center for Naval Engineering on Navy Knowledge Online at www.nko.navy.mil. ■

Story by LT Susan Henson, public affairs office, Naval Personnel Development Command, Norfolk.

Electronic Training Jackets Help Sailors Manage Their Careers

The Electronic Training Jacket (ETJ) tool on the Navy Knowledge Online (NKO) Web site is an important link for Sailors to track their career progression and prepare for advancement.

ETJ integrates data from a host of Navy databases to provide active-duty or Reserve personnel a complete history of

the knowledge, skills and abilities they offer to the U.S. Navy.

"The Navy's ultimate goal for ETJ is to give every Sailor access to education and training information anywhere, at any time, to support individual and operational readiness for the fleet," said Naval Education and Training Command (NETC) Force Master Chief Michael J. McCalip.

ETJ collates all the training, education, special qualifications, certifications, skills, awards and other data pertaining to a Sailor's career. The information is maintained in various folders within the Sailor's training jacket. With all of this data available at their fingertips, Sailors can now manage their own ETJ folders to ensure that everything is in the right place at the right time for career progression.

Senior Chief Electronics Technician William McKeithen, NETC enlisted PME manager, believes that individuals should

think of their Electronic Training Jacket as an online resume.

"ETJ is where Sailors must validate and update their personal educational data. In the very near future, as part of Sea Warrior, this information may be used to determine suitability for billet assignments and promotion," McKeithen said. "It's your resume, a history of your career and accomplishments, qualifications and education."

McKeithen said the process of updating the ETJ is fast. "Online NKO courses update very quickly. I recently completed an NKO online course, and it was listed at the top of my ETJ training folder within the week. College courses take a little longer to be updated, typically from two to four weeks from the time a Sailor turns in the information."

Step-by-step instructions are included for updating and correcting information in each folder of the Electronic Training Jacket. After a Sailor logs into the ETJ portal, they will find a 'Problems with your data?' hyperlink on the lower portion of the screen. All a Sailor has to do is click on this link, and a

pop-up screen appears listing the procedures and points of contact for updating their information.

If Sailors are still having problems getting their information updated, they should contact their local Personnel Support Activity (PSA) or ask for help via the ETJ feedback link. They can also ask for assistance from their peers via one of the many message boards on NKO.

According to McCalip, "Sea Warrior is our Navy's future. And as we become a smaller, better-educated and more highly-trained force, it becomes increasingly important that our professional Sailors take an active role in managing their online resume."

For more information on ETJ, visit the NKO Web site at <https://www.nko.navy.mil>. For more information on the Naval Education and Training Command, visit the NETC command Web site at <https://www.netc.navy.mil>. ■

Story by Jon Gagne, public affairs office, Naval Education and Training Command, Pensacola, Fla.

Shipmates

Aviation Ordnanceman 3rd Class Brandon Lambaiso, of Strike Fighter Squadron 27, Atsugi, Japan, was recently selected to attend Officer Candidate School, Pensacola, Fla. Lambaiso, a 2002 graduate of the Virginia Military Institute, will be commissioned as an ensign and sent to flight school upon completion of OCS. He was selected for one of the six pilot slots available Navywide.



Manage Your Stress "Online"

Navy Environmental Health Center (NEHC) Portsmouth launched a Web-based tool early this summer known as the Navy Systematic Stress Management Program, to assist active-duty Sailors and Marines and their families in managing stress.

This program is the latest innovation in NEHC's health promotion community health awareness campaign, offering strategies for prevention, management and early intervention for stress.

"We all face stress every day, and can benefit from and improve our stress control strategies and stress-busting skills," said Dr. Mark Long, NEHC's program specialist for stress management. "Stress is part of daily living, and the better we can cope with distress, then the better we can deal with life, work, relationships and other stressors."

The intent of the program is to enable any user access to a stress management tool regardless of location.

"It doesn't matter if you're at sea, deployed to Iraq, on duty or at home; the Web-based program

continued on page 9

Ricky's Tour

By J01 Mike Jones

www.rickystour.com



Around the Fleet

▼ Plane captains assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 34 observe flight operations from the catwalk aboard USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72).

Photo by PHAN James R. McGury



▲ HM3 Jason Peal sutures a patient's hand in the medical ward aboard the amphibious assault ship USS *Kearsarge* (LHD 3).

Photo by PHAN Dexter Roberts

▼ SN William Dawes, assigned to USS *Constitution*, prepares for the first turnaround cruise of the year. The "Military Appreciation Day Cruise," was planned in recognition of the 60th anniversary of World War II.

Photo by SN Nick Lyman





▲ MTCM Leon Ford (foreground), and ABH1 Roger Miracle jump out of a UH-3H *Sea King* helicopter at 10,000 feet during a training jump over Whidbey Island, Wash.

Photo by PH3 Chris Olsen

To be considered for the "Around the Fleet" section, forward your **high resolution (5" x 7" at 300 dpi) images** with full credit and cutline information, including **full name, rank and duty station** to: navyvisualnews@navy.mil

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Click on the **Navy's** home page, www.navy.mil, for fresh images of your shipmates in action.

continued from page 7

is available 24/7," Long said. "Think of using the program as a way to build your stress muscles, to improve your resiliency or even as a stress tune-up."

Equally important is the fact that the Navy Systematic Stress Management Program supports healthcare providers, supervisors, or anyone else involved in stress management intervention, as well as individuals using the program as a "self-help" tool. In short, anyone (including family members or retirees) looking for stress management assistance can use this tool if they have access to a personal computer.

For more information on dealing with stress, visit the Navy Systematic Stress Management Program homepage available on the Navy Environmental Health Center Web site at www.nehc.med.navy.mil/hp/stress/index.htm. ■

Story by Hugh Cox, public affairs office, Navy Environmental Health Center, Portsmouth, Va.

Military Medical Records Go Paperless

A DOD initiative to transition patient records from paper to a new digital health care database is scheduled to begin at the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC), Bethesda, Md., Sept. 18.

The new system, known as the Composite Health Care System II (CHCSII), is an upgraded version of the original CHCS program used by military health care providers for more than a decade. CHCSII will allow medical personnel to enter patient information directly into an electronic medical record without needing to first hand-write the record of the visit.

CHCSII will maintain the digital information in a centralized database, creating a comprehensive, life-long, computer-based patient record for each and every military health beneficiary. Furthermore, since the program acts as a database, hospital functions like laboratory, radiology and pathology test results will be faster. CHCSII will also improve patient safety through automatic alerts of potential allergic reactions and drug-to-drug interactions.

"This is a great change for our staff and patients," said CAPT Mark Olesen, deputy commander NNMC. "It propels us into the future of medicine, which is a world of immediate digital access, virtually unlimited and everlasting information storage capacity, and worldwide connectivity."

Although CHCSII will not immediately eliminate the use of paper records, as hospital officials point out, it is the first step toward a more efficient and integrated Navy Medicine.

"Eventually, after CHCSII is implemented worldwide, a sick or injured Sailor treated on a ship halfway around the world can be transferred to Bethesda and all of his medical information is accessible – even if he didn't have time to grab his paper record," said CAPT Kenneth Senn, CHCSII project officer at the NNMC.

Several other military medical facilities have already transitioned to CHCSII, including Naval Medical Center Portsmouth. Naval Medical Center San Diego is currently in its CHCSII implementation process.

For related news, visit the National Naval Medical Center Navy NewsStand page at www.news.navy.mil/local/nnmc/. ■

Story by Ellen Maurer, public affairs office, National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Md.

Around the Fleet



▲ OS2 Lucas Weaver mans the strike control console aboard USS *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) during flight operations.

Photo by PHAN Joshua Wayne LeGrand

► Flight deck crew members wash down the flight deck aboard USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) prior to flight operations.

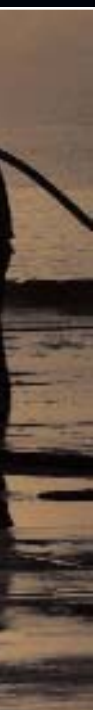
Photo by PH3 Matthew M. Todhunter





▲ ABH3 Robert Frescatore and ABH3 Joshua Miller participate in the annual "Save the Bay clean-up project around the Chesapeake Bay. More than 1,000 Sailors from USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) were involved in the event.

Photo by PH3 Andrew Morrow



New Career Handbook Provides Tools for Planning Sailors' Futures

Sailors and their families have a new tool to assist them in making career decisions – the 2005 edition of the Career Handbook. The 27-page booklet puts information on Navy benefits and core career-enhancing programs at Sailors' fingertips in an easy-to-use format.

"The Career Handbook is an adaptation of what used to be the Retention Handbook," said LT Selina Burford, Navy Personnel Command Communications Office, Millington, Tenn. "In concert with the Sea Warrior initiative, today's Sailors have much more control over their careers through programs such as JCMS (JASS Career Management System), 5-Vector Model and others. We wanted to give them another tool they could share with their families and use to make important career-enhancing decisions."

The handbook is broken down into seven areas: why the Navy is the employer of choice, enlisted personnel information, selection boards, officer information, education programs, career transition and retirement, and additional resources.

It also lists resources to which Sailors can go for additional information on the items in the handbook, such as Web sites and specific regulations.

"The Handbook is a very useful tool for Navy counselors, career counselors and for chiefs or mentors to use in counseling sessions," said Burford. "It's meant to target not only active-duty Sailors, but also Navy Reservists and retirees," she added.

Copies were originally distributed as an insert to the May issue of *All Hands* magazine. It is now available online on the Navy Personnel Command Web site at www.npc.navy.mil. ■

Story by JO1 Teresa J. Frith, public affairs office, Navy Personnel Command, Millington, Tenn.

'Families First' to Transform Personal Moves

The process of service members moving their household goods – virtually unchanged for many years – is about to transform.

The Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) is developing a new process called 'Families First' that is scheduled to launch Feb. 1, 2006.

Families First is designed to alleviate some of the stress of moving by involving the service members in the process and giving them a voice in how their personal property is moved.

"The working partnership between the moving industry and the U.S. military is a long-standing, mutually productive and positive relationship," said Thomas Hicks, the command's program director for personal property moves. Every year, about 500,000 service members and civilian employees move to new duty stations.

Under Families First, transportation offices will use a "best value" approach that focuses on performance. Most moving business will be awarded to transportation service providers who do the best work as measured by the customer. That customer, the service member, will exercise his or her voice by completing a

continued on page 13

Around the Fleet



▲ More than 750 Navy and Marine Corps personnel and family members, along with residents of Kings County Calif., participate in the 12th Annual Marion Carl Memorial Mud Run at Naval Air Station Lemoore, Calif.

Photo by PH2 Julian T. Olivari

► MA3 Timothy Crowley (right) and LTJG Eric Madonia, commanding officer of *GTMO 5.0* paddle to a 3rd place finish in the U.S. Naval Base Guantanamo Bay 5th Annual Cardboard Regatta.

Photo by PH1 Christopher Mobley





▲ AMAN Fredrick B. Warner plays a game of "Hole In One" during a steel beach picnic held on the flight deck aboard USS *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69).

Photo by PHAN Peter Carnicelli

▼ Sept 15, 1942



Hit by three torpedoes from a Japanese submarine, USS *Wasp* (CV 7) sinks while operating in the Southwestern Pacific in support of forces on Guadalcanal. After the sinking, destroyers USS *Laffey* (DD 459) and USS *Lansdowne* (DD 486), and cruisers USS *Helena* (CL 50) and USS *Salt Lake City* (CA 25) rescued 1,946 men. One hundred and ninety-three members of *Wasp*'s crew were lost with the ship.

continued from page 11

web-based customer satisfaction survey to measure the performance of their movers.

"We all share the goal of providing the best customer service to those who deserve it the most, the American service member," Hicks said. "Families First unites the moving industry, the [military] services and SDDC in a sensible and cooperative manner to achieve this goal.

Transportation service providers providing the best service will receive the most business. This emphasis on customer satisfaction is expected to stimulate better quality work from all transportation service providers.

Families First also promotes customer satisfaction through:

- Full-replacement value for property lost or damaged beyond repair;
- Direct claims settlement between the service member and transportation service provider;
- Web-based counseling option; and
- Increased emphasis on direct deliveries - reducing temporary storage requirements.

Currently, service members may only receive a depreciated value for property lost or damaged beyond repair in a move. In the new program, a member is entitled to the current replacement value of the item.

For example, a five-year-old television with a replacement cost of \$200 would be valued at only \$100 if lost or damaged beyond repair now. That \$200 replacement cost is depreciated at 10 percent a year. Under full-replacement value, the transportation service providers will either replace the lost or damaged item with a new item – or reimburse the service member the full cost of a new one.

There are some exceptions where the transportation service

provider may replace the lost or damaged item with a comparable used item. The exceptions list includes boats, personal watercraft, ultralight aircraft, pianos, musical organs, firearms, art objects, all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles.

Today moving claims are handled through the closest military claims office. In Families First, service members file a claim directly with the transportation service provider using SDDC's web-based claim filing process, a part of SDDC's new Defense Personal Property System. If no settlement is reached within 30 days, a service member may transfer the claim to the servicing military claims office.

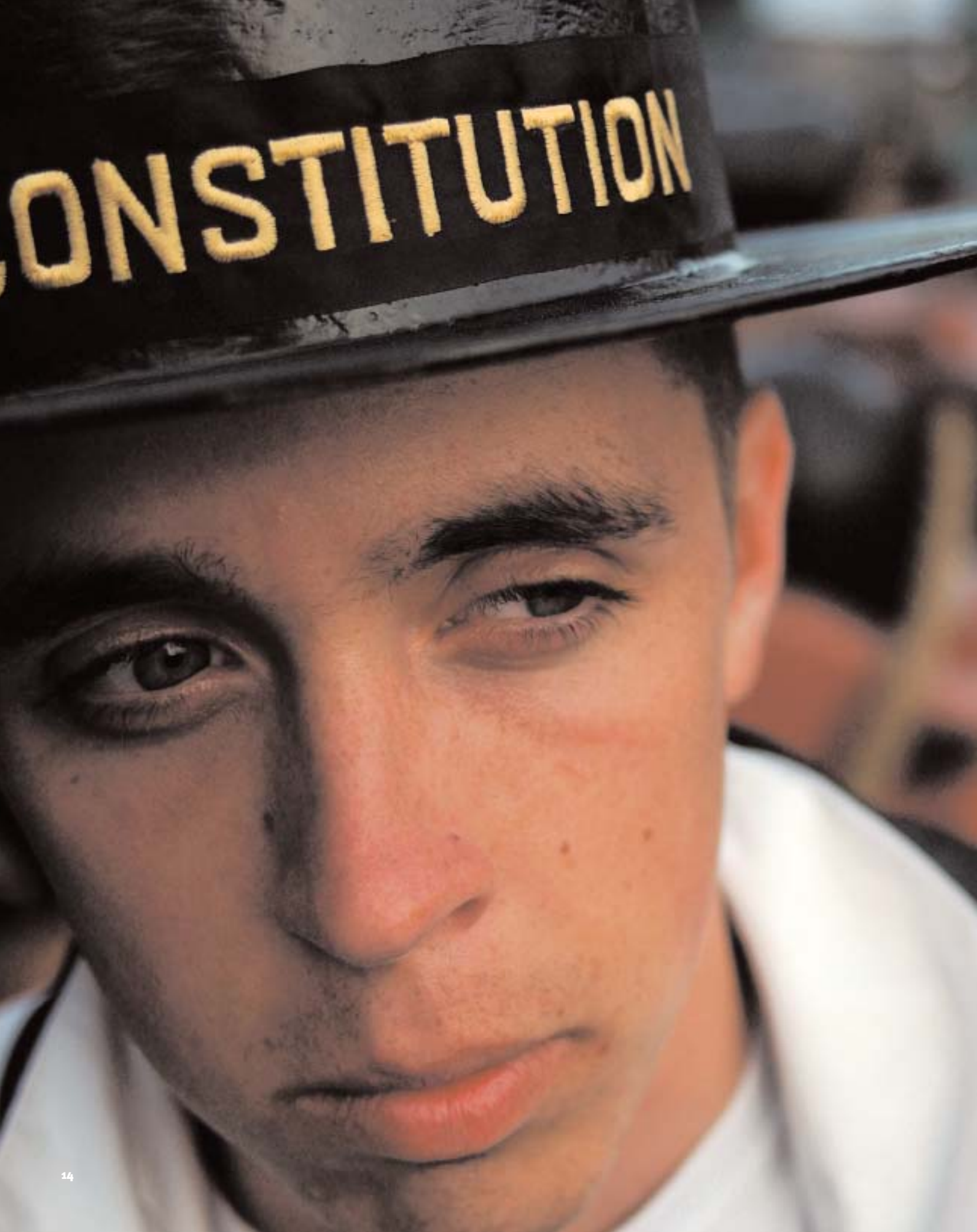
In all claims processing, maximum transportation service provider limit of liability increases to \$50,000 – up from the current \$40,000.

Presently, service members receive pre-move information from the local transportation office or the Department of Defense pamphlet entitled "It's Your Move." In Families First, service members have an added option and convenience to receive pre-move counseling through SDDC's web-based Defense Personal Property System.

Families First encourages door-to-door moves with the goal of sharply reducing temporary storage. Temporary storage results in more handling, delay and expense, all of which increases risk to the shipment.

"Under the new program, we will work closely with the services to synchronize member relocations so most moves may be door to door," Hicks said. "Families First represents a dramatic change in the way we do business." ■

Story by LaWanda York, American Forces Press Service, Alexandria, Va.



◀ **SN Chris Thomas** stands on the main deck of the legendary warship USS *Constitution*, homeported in Boston.

Sailors Step into the Past...

TO SAILORS STATIONED
ABOARD USS *CONSTITUTION*,
“OLD IRONSIDES” IS MORE
THAN JUST A TOUR SHIP.

Story and photos by JO1 Charles L. Ludwig



Boston is under attack!

Although people may not hear about it on cable news stations or read about it in their local newspapers, Boston residents hear it. They hear the unmistakable hiss, crackle and boom of cannon blasts as the shots go off, and can smell the smoke rolling in from the harbor.

On this day, those short, ear-splitting explosions give the city an audible reminder of what “Beantown” must have sounded like throughout the Revolutionary War.

But this is not 1776, and the British are not attacking. It’s 2005, and aboard USS *Constitution*, Seaman Jeremy Mish has just fired off one of the 207-year-old ship’s starboard cannons during a 21-gun salute.

So, Boston is not under attack; it’s simply one of many instances of the past meeting the present aboard the world’s oldest commissioned warship.

“I wouldn’t think that many [Sailors] are used to hearing a cannon fire off on board a ship for colors,” Mish said. “But here, we do that every day.”

For Sailors stationed on “Old Ironsides,” past meets present at nearly every turn. For some, it’s one of the aspects that attracts them to the ship.

“I’ve always been interested in history,” said SN Michelle Sowers, who, like nearly 60 percent of the ship’s crew, arrived immediately from boot camp. “And being here has definitely hit me. From giving tours to just being on the ship, everything

here is right up my alley.”

Tours give local residents and tourists their best up close and personal view of not only *Constitution*, but of her Sailors as well. Each day, Sailors ranging in rank from seaman recruit to petty officer 1st class, are responsible for taking tour groups throughout the ship’s decks.

Along the way, they provide visitors with inside knowledge of the ship’s characteristics and storied past. In taking people along the Navy’s “memory lane,” the tour guides show off the ship’s main, gun and berth decks, all the while telling the stories of the ship’s perfect battle history.

Old Ironsides got her nickname from that history. Having never lost in 33 battles on the seas, *Constitution* was known to frustrate enemy ships who would watch as cannon balls repeatedly bounced off her sides.

That story, along with that of *Constitution*’s battles with Great Britain’s HMS *Guerriere* and HMS *Java*, are among many that tour guides aboard the ship must be able to reference easily.

To do so, the ship’s leadership makes sure every Sailor is proficient in the ship’s history and how they tell the stories to visitors.

“We enforce a PQS (personnel qualification standard) that incorporates all of our ship’s history and different techniques on giving tours,” said Fire Controlman 1st Class (SW) Andrew Wenzel, the training department’s leading petty officer.

“There’s three levels to it—basic, advanced and master (tour guide qualifications). You really have to know your stuff here.”

Along with that PQS, *Constitution* Sailors go through training twice a week on topics ranging from general military subjects to proper use of humor during tours.

Despite all that, sometimes you need to learn things on your own, according to Sowers.

“The first time I gave a tour I was kind of a wreck,” Sowers said. “I was all ready to go out there and give a great tour. I had all the information ready. But when I gave the tour, the entire time I was speaking too softly. The training can’t teach us everything.”

While conducting tours aboard the ship, the same Sailors who arrived fresh from Great Lakes or from sea duty are almost immediately put at the forefront of Navy public interaction.

They see as many as 3,000 people a day. “We need to be sharp over here to do our jobs properly,” said SN Stephen Bland. “For a lot of people, we are the only Sailors they will see up close in their lives.”

Because of that, the leadership on *Constitution* takes exceptional care when selecting and training new crew members.

For those coming to the ship straight from Recruit Training Command, that means receiving a personal visit from Old Ironsides’ command senior chief while still in Great Lakes, Ill.



▲ Long lines of tourists and visitors

looking to get on “Old Ironsides” are common-place. On a typical day, more than 2,000 people cross the ship’s brow.

► CDR Lewin C. Wright, commanding

officer, USS *Constitution* salutes the crowd during the turnaround cruise.

The command senior chief takes a trip to Great Lakes roughly every six months, according to *Constitution* Executive Officer LT Brad Coletti.

“When there, he will look everyone over and tell them about duty here,” he said. “After we get a good look at everyone, we see who would be interested in coming here.”

Constitution picks up four or five new recruits for duty every six months or so. “We make sure we get the best people we can every time we go up there,” Coletti said. “It has paid off for us.”

The process is very similar for more experienced Sailors. They must receive an endorsement letter from their current commanding officer and have a record review before being considered.

If everything goes well in the first two steps, a prospective member must then have a phone interview with the command senior chief before being accepted for orders.

“It’s kind of a nerve-wracking deal if you really want orders here,” said Electronics Technician 1st Class (SW/PJ) David Daris. “But the interview isn’t a real tough deal. It’s more just showing you have the confidence to get the job done in front of a lot of





people. That's what ends up being the biggest part of our job."

Once accepted for orders, whether junior or senior enlisted, everyone must quickly learn to adjust to an environment unlike any other in the Navy.

"This command is obviously unique," Coletti said. "I cannot think of another command that is as one-on-one with the public as this one. You have to be able to learn very quickly how to adjust."

That can be said of nearly every aspect of duty on the Navy's most-recognizable ship. On *Constitution*, Sailors used to coping with the gray, metal monsters teeming with the most technologically advanced equipment in the world learn to deal with wooden decks, sail masts and cannon fire.

It all makes for a major adjustment. "This is a strange, strange place to come to after being in the fleet for a while," said

Gunner's Mate 2nd Class (SW) Arturo Ochoa. "You come here, and it sometimes feels like you really [step] back a couple of centuries."

For Ochoa, the change was especially pronounced. As a gunner's mate, he was trained to fire and perform maintenance on today's modern weapons.

Now, he carries out general maintenance and repairs to the ship's centuries-old cannons. "That's something I can say I never thought I would be working on when I joined up and made rate," Ochoa said.

That sentiment goes across the board when talking about uniforms aboard the ship.

While several tour guides choose to conduct tours wearing the modern-day Navy uniform, everyone is issued authentic circa 1813 uniforms to wear in ceremonies. They are also authorized for day-to-day use on the ship.



◀ **One of the more controversial items** aboard *Constitution* is the ship's barber chair. Several rumors have circulated that the chair was not originally aboard, but no one is completely sure of the part it played in Sailors' day-to-day lives.

▶ **After a day's worth of tours, SN Chris Thomas** and other Sailors work to re-polish all the brass aboard the ship. Polishing is a nightly job for the duty section.

▼ **SN Stephen Bland addresses his** tour group while standing on the ship's main deck. *Constitution's* crew of 54 Sailors must complete an intense training routine to be considered qualified to conduct tours on a daily basis.



According to SN Chris Thomas, those uniforms lend a sense of pride to their wearers. "Sometimes you can really forget it's 2005 when you are sitting on this ship, wearing this uniform," he said. "It makes you feel good about the decision you made to join the Navy and come here."

And even though the duty station is considered shore duty, *USS Constitution* still gets underway several times a year.

"That's when everything we do comes together," said *Constitution's* Commanding Officer CDR Lewin C. Wright. "All the training, the 1813 uniforms, firing off the cannons – it all comes into play for our turnaround cruises."

In June, Old Ironsides went out for the first of its turnaround cruises for 2005. For the cruise, the ship navigated Boston Harbor, powered by tugs alongside, in honor of Bunker Hill Day.

Spots on the turnaround weren't



▲ (From left) ET1(SW/PJ) David Daris, FN Jonathon Porter, SN Youssef Azami and SN Angela Nice help get the ship ready for tours after pulling in from a turnaround cruise. The cruises serve both ceremonial and practical purposes, as they commemorate special observances and even out wear and weathering of the ship.

◀ While stationed aboard *Constitution*, Sailors must be able to communicate effectively with visitors both young and old. This is one of the abilities Sailors such as HT3 Zach Richards must display before being accepted for duty on the ship.

► **As one of the world's oldest** commissioned warships, "Old Ironsides" attracts tourists from many countries.

limited to crew members. Besides her crew of 54, *Constitution* packed 650 local residents on board for the day. The passengers participated in an online lottery to claim their spot on the ship.

It's that kind of support from the locals that keeps *Constitution* going, Wright says. "Just knowing that people like that are out there makes us happy. They love us, and we do everything we can do to make them proud of us as well," Wright said.

For *Constitution*, this means six turnaround cruises in 2005 (including two exclusively for chief selectees) and participating in many local celebrations throughout the year, including the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II in August.

The day following the June turnaround, Mish again fired off the ship's starboard cannon; this time the occasion was morning colors. A few hours later, nearly half the crew took part in a Bunker Hill Day commemoration in Charlestown, Mass., one of the Boston suburbs.

There, in sweltering 95-plus degree temperatures, the Sailors of *Constitution* marched two miles past many onlookers until they eventually passed the Bunker Hill Memorial.

On the way, they passed by Michael Kennedy, a 73-year-old, lifelong resident of the Boston area. He, like almost everyone else along the route, stood and cheered as Old Ironsides' Sailors marched in front of him.

"These [Sailors] and their ship mean more to this town than the Red Sox," he said, pointing at the crew. "They were here as long as I can remember, and hopefully they'll be here long after I am gone." ■

Ludwig is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.

Website Exclusive

Find more photos online at www.news.navy.mil/media/allhands/flash/ah200509/feature_1/





◀ **CMDCM(SW/AW) Loretta Glenn**

proudly displays the insignia of her new position aboard USS *Gettysburg* (CG 64). She is taking over duties from 30-year Navy veteran CMDCM(SW/AW) Gary Campbell, who is retiring. In 2000, command master chiefs' ratings were removed and replaced with CMDCM.

BUILDING THE TRIAD

The Navy's new approach to giving you a better-equipped CMC

Story and photos by PH1(AW) Shane T. McCoy

When Command Master Chief Loretta Glenn stepped aboard USS *Gettysburg* (CG 64) for the first time as command master chief (CMC), she had a plan. She had been going over it for the last two months while waiting for the departing CMC to retire. She knew exactly what her goals were and how to accomplish them, and she knew she wasn't alone.

You see Glenn had recently completed the newest senior leadership course in the Navy, the Command Master Chief/Chief of the Boat (CMC/COB) course at the Senior Enlisted Academy, Newport, R.I. There she was given the tools to dive headfirst into her command role. She not only had the training, but also a huge network of current and former CMCs to help her with any problem she might encounter.

"I didn't just get a turnover from one CMC, I got a turnover from a bunch of them," said Glenn. "I have to take my hat off to master chiefs who went into their first CMC tour and winged it, figuring out the job and paving the way for the rest of us."

Some of the same CMCs who "paved the way" are the facilitators and writers of the CMC course. As Glenn gets started in her new command, she will have them to fall back on if she needs any guidance.

"We tell them that once they get to their commands, they will run into a wall at some point," said Irvin Clifton, a retired force master chief and one of the facilitators of the course. "And when that happens, they call or e-mail us here for advice."

Clifton explained he didn't understand what his job was when he arrived at his first CMC assignment. He was told he was responsible for the command climate, but didn't know what that meant. He was told he was to work with the CO and XO, but didn't know to what level.

"Now we give them a chance to make their mistakes in a school, so when they fall, they fall on carpet and not on the non-skid of a ship," said Clifton.

Before the CMC/COB course was developed in 2002 by order of Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (SS/AW) Terry Scott, the Senior Enlisted Academy was the only education source available for senior and master chiefs in the Navy. While this course offered solid leadership skills to the Navy's enlisted hierarchy, it didn't address the specifics required of a new CMC.

"The Senior Enlisted Academy and CMC course are two different levels of education," according to CMDCM (SW/SCW/AW) Ralph Rao, director of

the Senior Enlisted Academy and one of the developers of the course. "The Senior Enlisted Academy is for a senior chief or even a new master chief. But when you are going to become a member of the command 'triad,' you need a higher education."

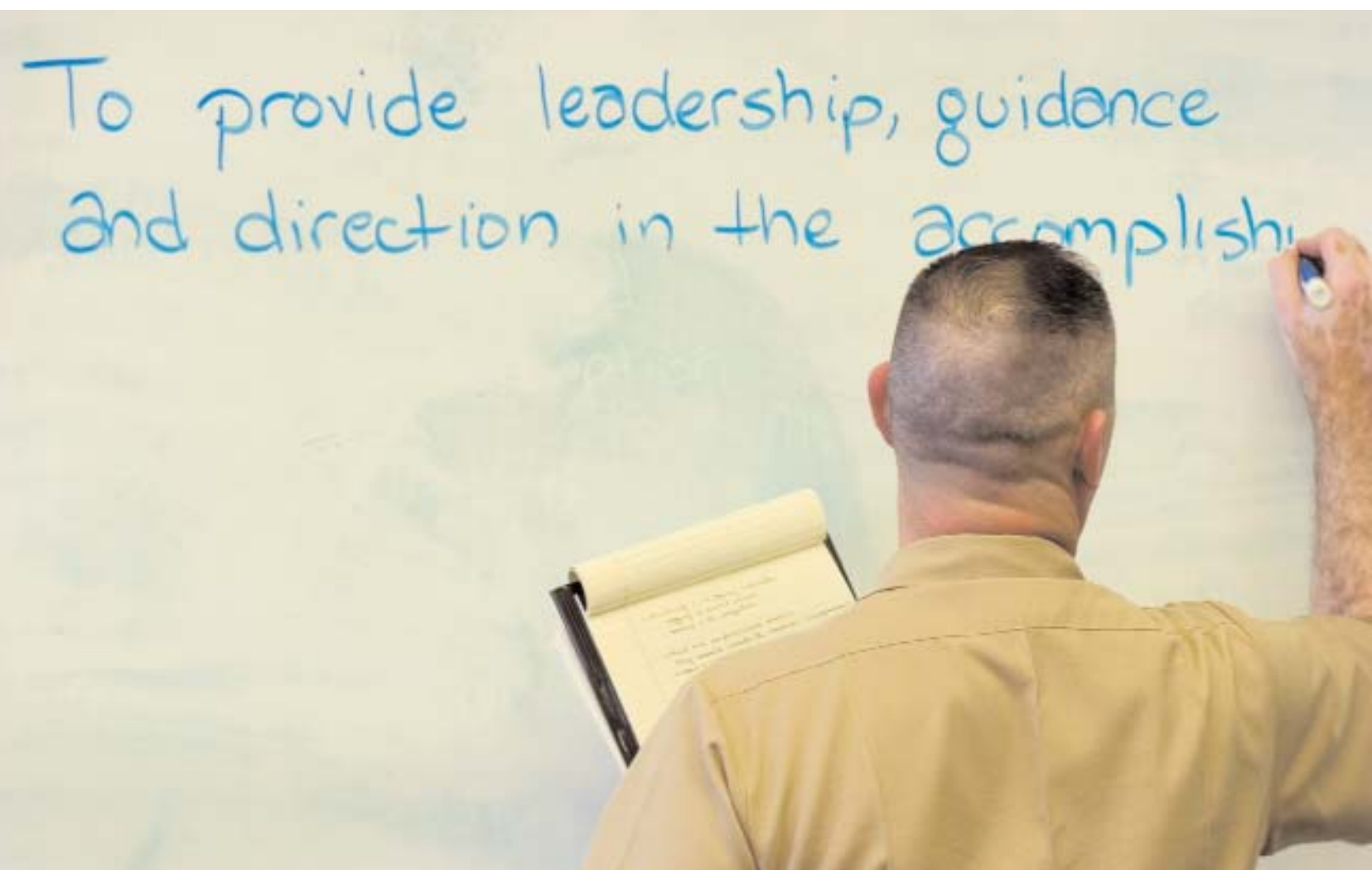
The triad is one of the primary emphases of the school. It's the phrase used to describe the relationship between the CO, XO and the CMC.

"If you have a tripod and remove a leg, it falls. It's the same thing with the triad of a command," said Clifton. "We are imprinting on the Navy that all three are one team."

▼ **One of the mandatory reading**

assignments for prospective CMCs is *The First 90 Days*, which discusses the importance of taking charge in a new leadership role.





The three positions have been in commands for a long time but are still being developed by the Navy into one mission-focused unit, with each position clearly defined.

To ensure senior Navy leaders are fully aware of what each position brings to a command, several topics of each leadership course have been merged. Prospective COs, XOs and CMCs are in the same classes working on case studies that challenge each position to their fullest and require them to use each other's strengths to solve problems.

"At one time, we would have the prospective COs and XOs come over to the Senior Enlisted Academy to talk with our classes," said Rao. "In this new course, we kick off the very first day with them

together and have case studies throughout."

These case studies give prospective CMCs a good look at some of the problems they may encounter when they reach their command, and also the insight of hearing from dozens of different COs how they might be handled. It would take years of working in different commands as a CMC to hear as many different viewpoints on one subject.

While the training given in the CMC/COB course is top-notch, all the classes in the world could not take the place of a good turnover from an experienced CMC. Luckily, Glenn is replacing a master chief with 30 years of service, four CMC tours and tons of experience under his belt.

CMDCM(SW/AW) Gary Campbell has used his experience to help *Gettysburg's* crew become one of the best on the

waterfront, where morale is high, and both retention and advancement are well above the Navy average. He never attended the new CMC course, but sees its merits.

"The Navy is putting out a new breed of master chief," said Campbell. "They are more polished, more professional, more knowledgeable of Navy programs and ready to take the role of command master chief into what is the future of the program."

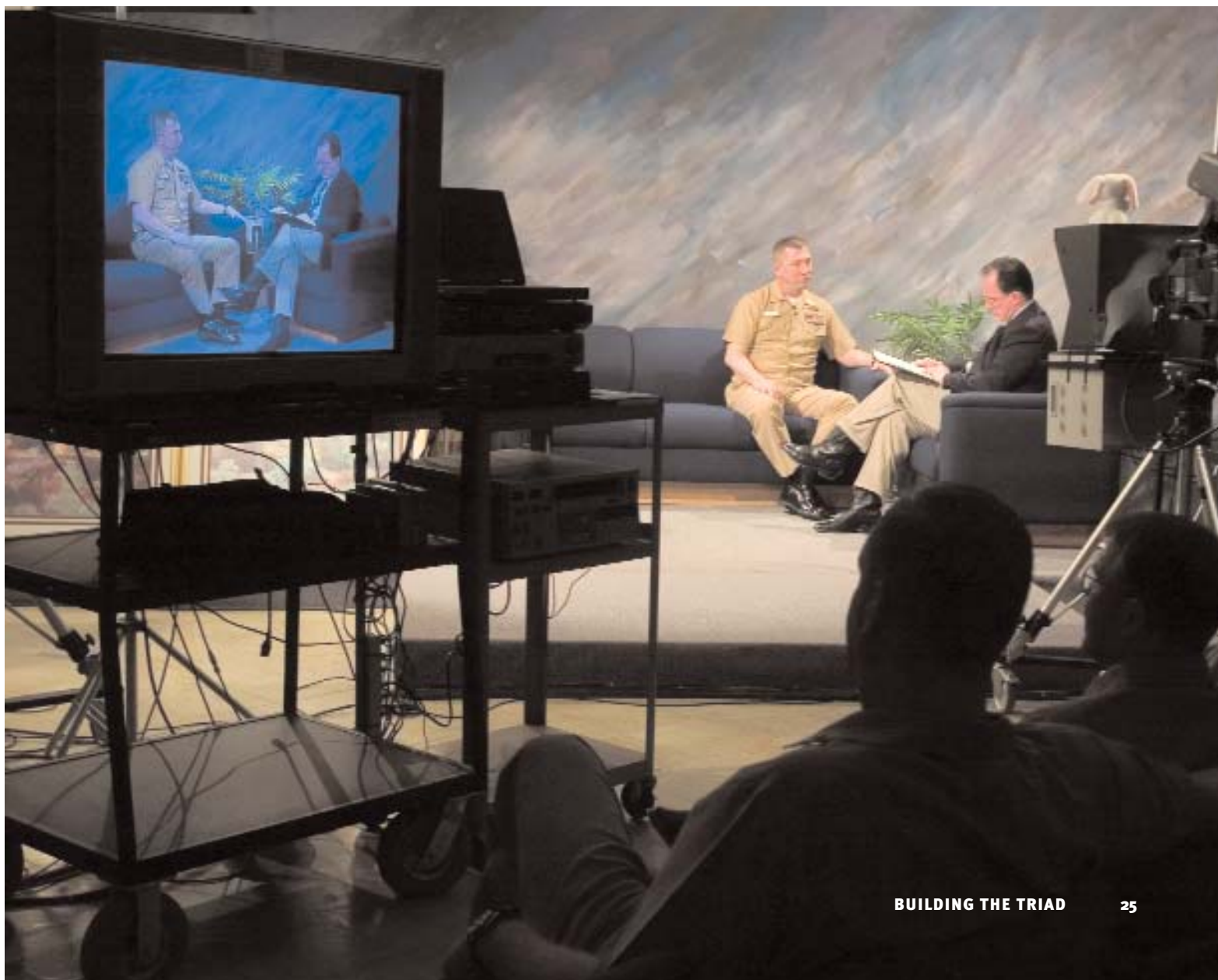
Campbell has developed his own philosophy on the evolution of the CMC program. He explained that there are currently four different generations of CMCs. The first started well before the official CMC program was established.

At that time, the position was called Senior Enlisted Advisor, and it always fell to the senior enlisted Sailor aboard the

◀ **CMDCM(SS) Jeffrey Travers** writes out what his group thinks are the responsibilities of a command master chief. The new CMC/COB course at the Senior Enlisted Academy gives prospective CMCs and COBs a chance to explore their roles before taking on their critical responsibilities.

▶ **All of the Navy's current CMCs** have been through the Senior Enlisted Academy, but the goal of the academy is to eventually have every CMC in the Navy go through the newly-established CMC/COB course.

▼ **On the last day of the CMC/COB** course, students spend the morning in a media class learning how to be interviewed. As CMCs they will be much more likely to be in this situation at their command and must be prepared to handle unexpected questions.





▲ You'll often find a CMC out and about talking to junior Sailors. Glenn firmly believes this is the only way to know the true morale of the ship.

◀ During several case studies at the CMC/COB course, prospective commanding officers and CMCs get to share their views on various topics.

ship or in the command. His job was simply to advise the CO. He did not have a lot of training but had tons of experience. He was also expected to continue as a master chief within his own rating.

The next generation, according to Campbell, was when the CMC program was officially started in 1971. The master chief was then removed from his rating, the rating insignia was removed and a star replaced it, and the CMC was established. At the time, the position was called Master Chief Petty Officer of the Command (MCPOC), but was soon changed to Command Master Chief. To become a CMC, you put in a request, and if the CMC detailer thought you could do the job, you were accepted.

In 1996, the third generation came about with a formal selection board for choosing CMCs. A package was (and still is) submitted, reviewed and a CMC was selected for their professional qualifications (see OPNAV 1306.2D, 19 DEC 2000). Attendance at the Senior Enlisted Academy also became a requirement. By 2000,



▲ **Campbell goes over the** programs already in place aboard USS *Gettysburg* during his turnover with Glenn. According to Campbell, “Today’s CMCs are more polished, professional and knowledgeable of Navy programs than ever before.”

► **A key to the course is** making sure that command master chiefs understand they will now be scrutinized by the entire crew for every action. This means if the CMC does not PT, the crew will think they don’t need to either. Prospective CMCs are also required to PT as a group and pass a PFA before reporting to their new command.







▲ One of Glenn's first duties as

CMC was to address her First Class Association. "I want them to take over our Junior Sailor of the Quarter board, to help develop them into my future chief's mess," she said. Glenn expects her senior petty officers to start taking a more active role in developing junior Sailors.

◀ One of Glenn's top priorities

after checking in was to get to know her ship. This tour of the engineering spaces is the first of many she'll take.

a CMC's rating was removed entirely and they received a new rate of CMDMC – refined shortly thereafter to the present rate of CMDCM.

The fourth generation began in 2003. The training pipeline was much more intense and formalized. This latest generation of CMCs have been through the CMC course and often have high-level college degrees. They not only have years of experience, but also carry with them knowledge from dozens of COs, XO's and CMCs.

So, what is all of this training going to do for the Sailors in your command? Your CMC (the only senior person who you can go to directly and without an appointment), has the knowledge he or she needs to lead you and the entire crew forward in your career.

"This school gave me a lot of resources to be able to help our young Sailors," Glenn said. "Any Sailor who comes in my door looking for help with family, money, career – whatever it may be, I have the knowledge to help them or at least know where to send them to get the help they need." ■

McCoy is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.

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▼ **The Residence is an 18th century,**

white Victorian house with green shutters, situated on a lush green hill on the grounds of the Naval Observatory in northwest Washington, D.C., north of Georgetown on Embassy Row. The U.S. Navy owns the home, which was occupied by the Chief of Naval Operations from 1923 to 1974.





An Elegant Presentation

Story and photos by PH3 Todd Frantom



Chief Culinary Specialist Dexter Johnson quietly makes his way down a narrow stairway into an enormous basement kitchen, carefully stepping over two Labradors sprawled on the cold floor. He quietly prepares an early morning fresh brew of coffee for a very important American.

But it's not an admiral that Johnson is serving as a Navy Enlisted Aide (NEA).

On this early morning, he served coffee to arguably the second most powerful man in the world, Vice President Dick Cheney.

Johnson is one of a handful of NEAs assigned to the Vice President's Residence in Washington, D.C.

The NEAs – whose rating is Culinary Specialist – do much more than make

▲ CS2 Sarah Fletcher carries a dish up a narrow stairwell on her way to the dining room of the Vice President's home. Recalling the many dignitaries she has interacted with, Fletcher said, "Bob Dole has been one of the kindest, most polite guests I have ever served here at the Residence."

coffee, though. They are responsible for everything from grocery shopping to laundry, and must also be able to create culinary masterpieces and elegantly entertain national and world leaders. NEAs provide service at every level to support the Vice President's Residence and his guests, and they travel domestically and abroad with the Vice President to provide support.

"We get a very personal view of a very public figure," said CSCS Dave Rodriguez.

▲ Navy Enlisted Aides load the Vice President's helicopter in preparation for an early morning departure. NEAs travel with the Vice President domestically and abroad, providing laundry, luggage and food security services. Said CSCS Dave Rodriguez, "We get a very personal view of a very public figure."

Like the magnificent Western portraits that adorn the halls of the Residence, they are permanent fixtures directly involved in the life of the Vice President. The NEAs also get to work in one of America's beautiful historic homes. The Residence is an 18th century, white Victorian house with green shutters, situated on a lush green hill on the grounds of the Naval Observatory in northwest Washington, D.C., north of Georgetown on Embassy Row. The U.S.



Navy owns the home, which from 1923 to 1974 was occupied by the Chief of Naval Operations.

Since 1974 the Navy NEAs have been responsible for the upkeep and organization of the four-story, 32-room Residence and pool house. Like an usher preparing an opera theater for the next show, they overlook no detail for both the occupants and their guests. And when called on to entertain, NEAs must have a working knowledge of both formal and informal household etiquette practices including

► **There is established protocol**

for the distance between all chair and table placements. It is this attention to detail that provides elegant service and presentation at the Cheneys' home.





table manners, formal service and guest protocol.

Elegant presentation of food is at the heart of their duties.

A monthly menu is planned, incorporating new recipes into a regular rotation of family favorites. Dinner parties require longer lead-time and special consideration, NEAs noted. Like Thanksgiving dinner at Mom's house, the meals are well planned and thought out.

"The Navy Dietician is a great help in planning the menu," said Master Chief Culinary Specialist Elmer Anies. Recipes are developed keeping in mind calories, saturated and hydrogenated fats, portion size and carbohydrates.

"It requires being creative to keep the food both flavorful and healthy," said CSC Gus Anies, brother of Elmer Anies. Sometimes recipes require special research.

"Once we were asked to make a special birthday cake for a high-profile guest," said Gus Anies. "We found out this man's favorite cake had caramel frosting. I had to do research in old cookbooks to come up with the recipe, but it was very gratifying when the guest said, 'This was so good. It reminds me of the birthday cakes my mother made for me as a child.'"

Sometimes, the foods have a distinctly Western flair. The Vice President, who hails from Wyoming, enjoys serving bison to dinner guests.

For the NEAs, expert food presentation

▲ **CSCM Elmer Anies works diligently**

in the large kitchen. It's his job to develop a menu in accordance with Navy health and physical fitness standards, while incorporating the tastes of the Cheneys.

► **CSC Dexter Johnson stands ready**

to provide water, while Lynne Cheney greets her guests as they arrive for dinner. NEAs have a working knowledge of formal and informal household entertaining practices including table etiquette, formal service and guest protocol.

starts with grocery shopping, which they do themselves. NEAs shop to ensure the food they serve is safe and fresh.

"Because we are preparing the food, we must know where it came from and we must also be able to ensure its freshness," said CS2 Sarah Fletcher.

The meals are prepared in the giant basement kitchen of the Residence, with culinary specialists rotating through the position of chef-in-charge.

The teamwork among NEAs to create well-designed meals increases their satisfaction and skills. Just like a utility player can play many positions on the baseball field, the NEAs also approach their duties at the Residence with the same flexibility.

"We rotate handling various tasks, but we each have a specialty and we constantly strive to learn more. That's the key to teamwork," said CSC Darian Horn.

While working at the Residence, NEAs have many opportunities to meet and serve



a wide variety of world leaders, celebrities and senior government officials.

NEAs working in the Residence must have regal social graces and be able to handle any demanding social situation with confidence and ease.

At home and on the road, the job of an NEA is never finished.

"We always have at least one NEA travel with the family to ensure that their level of comfort anywhere is the same as here at the Residence," said Fletcher.

"As NEAs, we are responsible for luggage, food, hotel, laundry service and most other personal needs the family may have while traveling."



Providing comfort and security on the road is of paramount importance to the NEAs. They coordinate with the Secret Service to ensure food safety by working with chefs to make certain that food is prepared in a safe and healthy manner any place the Vice President will dine. NEAs even ensure beverages and fruit are available in the Vice President's hotel room.

"It's our responsibility to anticipate the things that would concern him to ensure that those things never worry the Vice President," said Horn.

One aspect of providing for everything the Vice President needs includes taking care of his clothing. Rodriguez serves as

the vice president's valet. "I was honored," he said of his selection for the position. Rodriguez must look ahead on the schedule to ensure that a tuxedo is cleaned and pressed when needed, that shoes stay shiny and that if a shirt needs mending, it gets fixed.

Only the most graceful presenters fit these specialized billets.

"We're looking for a squared-away Sailor, both in person and on paper," said Elmer Anies. He added that fitness reports are reviewed carefully, as well as all aspects of a person's background, including financial and criminal records, to select individuals for these sensitive positions.

Background screening can go back as far as 20 years.

Gus Anies recalled that "the interview process is really intense and very thorough."

"This job really requires a certain personality," said Rodriguez. "One day, you're the chef-in-charge of the kitchen, but the next day you're cutting vegetables and washing dishes. That's a hard adjustment for some people. You have to be humble," he said.

Elmer Anies said that anyone in the CS rating can apply for this desirable position and find more information from his or her detailer. "I was on duty in Bremerton, Wash., when Gus called and asked if I was



interested in NEA duty. I hadn't seen Gus in six years, so I submitted my request to the special programs detailer. After receiving a personal interview and getting my background checked, I got the position."

Sailors filling these CS positions must grasp the knowledge and traits of etiquette to make the residents and their guests comfortable even under extraordinary

circumstances. They have to pay close attention to the finest details that a normal host may overlook. For example, they measure out the chairs at the lengthy dining table to be precisely placed, and use a ruler to measure the exact distance between place settings. Nothing is overlooked in the elegant presentation.

NEAs often wear tuxedos when carrying

out duties in the presence of the Cheneys and their guests.

"We are allotted special clothing allowances to purchase and maintain any uniform we are required," said Rodriguez.

Dressed to impress, the way the Sailors carry themselves, what they wear, and, more importantly, how they interact with guests are all part of the demands of working in



the company of national leaders.

"I would advise Sailors who have completed Culinary Specialized Training and are interested in this position to take a House and Management Course," said Elmer Anies.

"This will enhance your knowledge of running a sophisticated property and entertaining at events ranging from different

sorts of ceremonies to formal dinners."

When talking to the NEAs about their experiences, they inevitably pivot the conversation back to talking about how much they enjoy working for Vice President and Mrs. Cheney. Though many of them have been at the Residence for several years, they still have a sense of awe about their work.

◀ Guests enjoy dinner with the Vice

President and his wife. The U.S. Navy owns the Vice President's Residence, also known as "Quarters A."

"I feel I have [reached] the pinnacle of my Navy career as a culinary specialist," said Rodriguez. "I started off as a seaman apprentice, worked as a captain's cook and then as a ship's cook."

"The Vice-President's Residence is the best place to be. On a ship there are many limits in cooking: time, equipment and the availability of ingredients," said Rodriguez. "Here, we have time to test recipes, learn new skills, develop menus and be creative. This job is about so much more than being a chef. You're a manager, a detailer and in charge of protocol."

"I'm still excited to come to work here," added Gus Anies, who emigrated from the Republic of the Philippines at 16 years of age and enlisted at 19. "As a child, I worked selling newspapers and cleaning recycled bottles to help out the family. Compared to what my life was like growing up, it's amazing that I'm here doing this and that so much trust has been placed in me," said Gus Anies.

The Navy Enlisted Aides' dedication to excellence and elegant presentation among the leaders of this country has not been overlooked. Here, among the halls of the Vice President's Residence in Washington, D.C., one man and his wife are especially grateful to these Sailors.

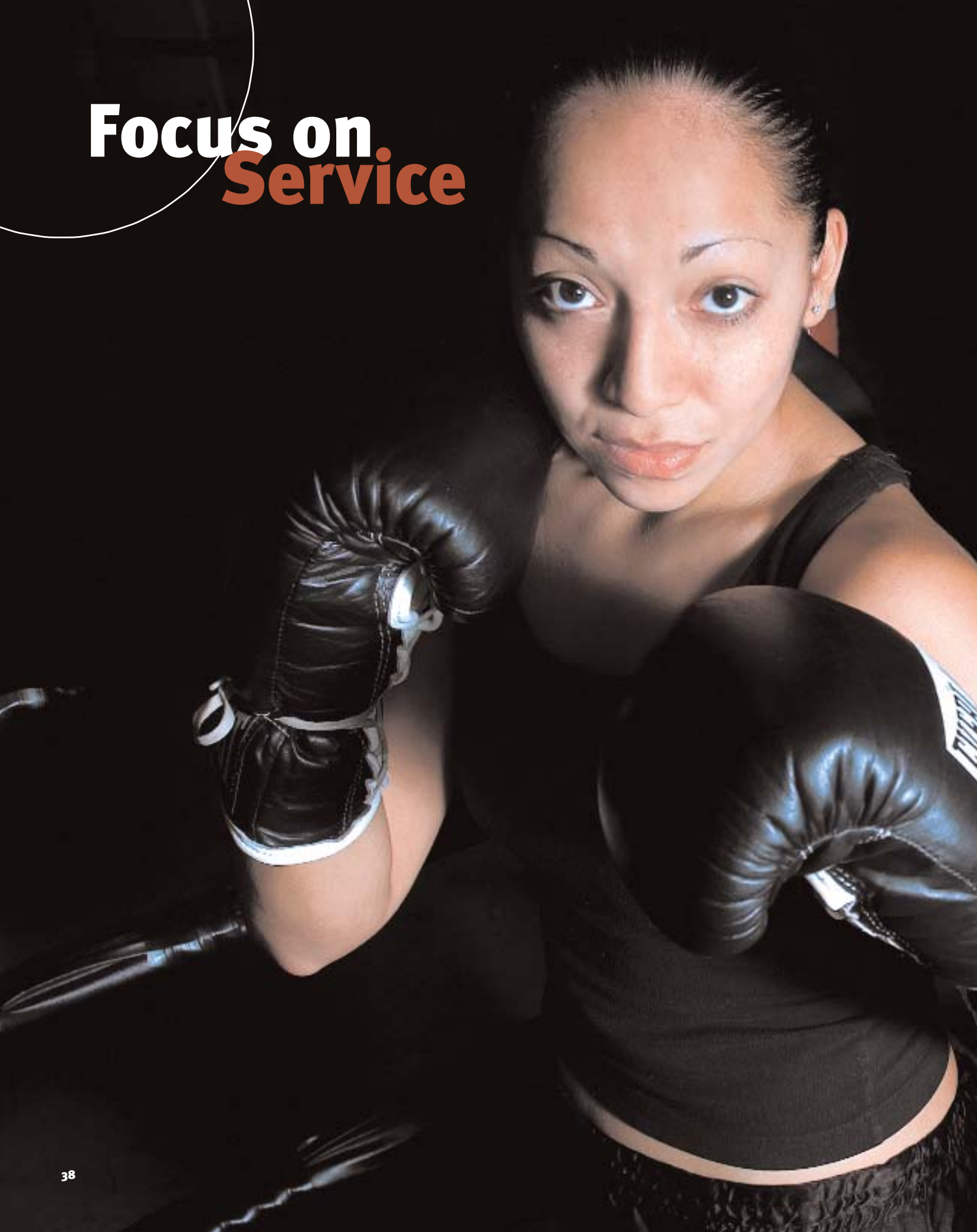
"The exceptional service that the Residence Navy Enlisted Aides provide my family and our guests makes us feel safe and comfortable in our home and on the road," said Vice President Cheney. "Lynne and I are grateful for the Navy men and women who serve at the Naval Observatory, and for the service of all men and women in our Armed Forces who are working hard to protect our country." ■

Frantom is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.

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www.news.navy.mil/media/allhands/flash/ah200509/feature_3/

Focus on Service





All her life, Information Systems Technician 3rd Class (SW) Triva Buie has been a fighter, but it wasn't until she climbed into the boxing ring two years ago that her attitude toward fighting shifted.

"I used to fight constantly – until the day I graduated from school," Buie said. "It seemed I always had a knack for getting into trouble. But I don't tolerate any altercations outside the ring anymore," said the soft-spoken hard-hitter. "If someone tries to start something with me now, I just walk away."

Buie, assigned to Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station Pacific (NCTAMS PAC), Honolulu, is like many of her male ringside counterparts; she's a fighter with

big dreams. This amateur is training hard to become the Navy Boxing team's first female fighter.

Although diligent and determined now, Buie, who fights under her maiden name, Pino, said it was her friends and family who convinced her that boxing just might be her calling. Once she accepted their advice, she quickly learned that boxing takes more than a fire in the belly. It also takes hard work and discipline.

"You think when you first climb into the ring it's going to be easy because you've been fighting your whole life," Buie said. "But it's completely exhausting! And, if you don't work out and prepare yourself for it, you'll never last."

These days, Buie's biggest challenge is finding competition. According to her coach at the Wahiawa Boxing Club, Carl Phillips, female boxing has picked up somewhat in CONUS, but it hasn't quite caught on in Hawaii. Should she realize her dream, Buie would have all the competition she can handle fighting fellow female members of the other Armed Forces' boxing teams.

Buie's currently ranked sixth in the United States. "She's only had two matches recently, both of them on the national level and above her fighting class," said Phillips. "So, to actually rank is pretty good for a newcomer."

With her rigorous training schedule and a few more upcoming exhibition bouts, the 27-year-old believes her lack of competition is about to change.

"To box for the Navy would be a dream come true," said Buie. "That's all I like to do. I get off work; I go to the gym. If I work at night, I go to the gym before. I'm at the gym at least two to three hours every day."

Buie attributes her fierce drive and determination to her closest female role model.

"I get my strength from my family – especially my Mom," said Buie. "She's the strongest woman I know, and she gave a lot of that strength to me."

Additionally, Buie says boxing has made her an all-around better Sailor. "Before I started boxing a few years ago, I weighed 187 pounds. Today, I'm down to 143, and hope to drop to another weight class soon," she said. "It's also taught me patience, how to follow orders and to work hard for my goals – which, I believe, helps me be a better leader for the Navy." ■

Darby is a photojournalist assigned to the Naval Media Center.



Words of Love

Story and photo by JO1(SW/AW) Anthony Sisti

“I wish I could get on top of the world and scream it out. All the gold on earth couldn’t match my love for you.” As I read those words and read about the man who penned them to his wife almost 40 years ago, I set out on a quest to see that letter, and I thought about how personal a letter could actually be.

For whatever reason, I’ve never really made the comparison between e-mail and hand-written letters, but a recent visit to the small town of Norton, Ohio, to view that letter brought sleepless nights and days of focus on this very subject.

Two years ago, I was in the middle of an eight-month deployment on board USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70), structuring my work toward anything that resembled a daily routine.

A good portion of that daily routine involved sitting down at my desk and responding to various e-mails involving everything from when the next general quarters drill would be to thanking my dad for wishing me a happy birthday.

Despite the timeliness of e-mail, it’s always been hard for me to peer inside that virtual mailbox and feel anything that resembles excitement. But, I do love the convenience of that new-fashioned correspondence.

In contrast, on a not too frequent basis, I’d hear “Mail Call, Hangar Bay 3,” and immediately drop what I was doing to make my way down to the hangar bay. I’d stand in line and pick up whatever packages or letters had made the long journey from various places around the globe to literally bless the public affairs office with their presence.

Even when there was nothing with my name on it, I was excited to give my co-workers their mail. It’s almost impossible to duplicate or replace the morale boost that comes with a small package or two-page letter.

Most of our Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen and Marines in Iraq and Afghanistan don’t have the option of choosing whether or not

they get excited about either e-mails or letters. Despite technological advances, their access to computers is extremely limited. So, regardless of individual preference toward either e-mail or those prehistoric letters, mail call is where it’s at. Just like 40 years ago.

Now, I wasn’t around 40 years ago, and I never knew what it was like to wait on a letter from a loved one during Vietnam. Then I pulled into Francie Nutter’s driveway in Norton, Ohio.

Her husband, Paul Nutter, served as a Marine Lance Corporal and spent 13 months in-country, sending and receiving letters to and from 19-year-old Francie Nolan, a young woman who grew up a few doors down from Paul. A woman whom he had taken to his senior prom.

The letters Paul sent to Francie began “Dear Fran.” But as the war escalated, so did the couple’s love for one another. Soon, the first line evolved to “Dearest Darling.”

Paul Nutter returned from Vietnam in early 1969 and the two were married just a few months later. They raised two children and now adore their two grandchildren.

Despite quadruple bypass surgery five years ago, 56-year-old Paul Nutter is now serving as a Navy Corpsman with a Marine Infantry Unit.

A few months ago, Francie Nutter pulled out the old letters from Vietnam, turned one over, and once again, began writing. Only now, the letters are addressed to Iraq. She wrote about her day-to-day activities in Norton, and again, about her love for Paul.

I think I’m falling in love again reading these letters,” said Francie Nutter. She said she rarely writes an e-mail. “They’re not as personal.”

She’ll continue to write to her husband on the back of the Vietnam letters until he returns, “hopefully later this year.”

I still haven’t been forced to choose, but the Nutters have convinced me. Now, I just need to delete my inbox and go buy some stamps. ■



Sisti is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.

Physical Training



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